

DUBLIN HOSPITALS AND THE GOVERNMENT.

Hospitals' Reply to Lord Crawford.

THE Richmond, Whitworth, and Hardwicke, known as the House of Industry Hospitals, Dublin, which have decided to close because they cannot fall further into debt, have appealed in vain, as THE HOSPITAL has recorded, for an increase of the Government grant. The matter was raised in the House of Lords, and after the Earl of Crawford's reply for the Government was published, Mr. W. Webster Smith, secretary, was instructed to issue the following statement on behalf of the joint hospital board to the Press:

As the answers, as reported in the Press, which Lord Shandon received from the Earl of Crawford in the House of Lords, to the questions concerning the financial difficulties of these hospitals, are very misleading, I have been asked to send you the following explanatory note:

The Earl of Crawford implies that the House of Industry Hospital grant dates only from 1856. The fact is that the Parliamentary grant to the hospitals dates from thirty years before the Union; that the amount of same varied with the necessities of the hospitals from 1800 to 1856—the average annual grant for the five years preceding 1856 being £11,719 12s.—and that it was only in 1856 that the grant was reduced to £7,600, a sum supposed at that time to be sufficient, but evidently insufficient now. By the Act of 1856 the government of the hospitals was retained in the hands of the Lord Lieutenant, who alone could nominate Governors. The Treasury Pension Regulations were applied to all permanent salaried offices in the hospitals, and every foot of ground and every stone

in the hospitals was vested in the Board of Works. These conditions would appear to render the hospitals a State institution, and certainly militate against their recognition by the public as on the same plane as the ordinary charitable hospitals.

With regard to the extra amounts of £7,000 and £6,000 referred to by Lord Crawford, these sums were paid, as they were to all similar institutions, for the maintenance of sick and wounded soldiers—a matter of loss rather than profit to the hospitals, seeing that last year it cost £119 1s. 10d. *per occupied bed per annum*, as against the sum received from the military of £86 13s. 9d.

Finally, Lord Crawford is reported to have said that the hospitals "received an income from endowments amounting to £150,000." There is not a shadow of foundation for this statement. The only permanent endowment outside the Parliamentary grant which the hospitals possess is a sum invested in Consols which brings in almost exactly one hundred pounds a year—and which by the terms of the original bequest cannot be realised.

May I add, to avoid any risk of imposture through the country, that no one has been authorised to collect money for the hospitals? This is not to say that we shall the less esteem the assistance of any kind friends who will help to tide us over the present period of difficulty.

W. WEBSTER SMITH, Secretary.

Richmond, Whitworth, and Hardwicke Hospitals,
Dublin.

WELSH NATIONAL MEMORIAL.

Results; and Proposed Chair of Tuberculosis.

WE alluded in our issue of August 9 to the invitation which has been made to the King by the Welsh National Memorial Association to open next spring the two sanatoria for North and South Wales at Llangwyfan and Pontywal. With their completion it is interesting to review the work accomplished by the Association hitherto, and especially since 1914. Statistics give a convenient summary. Since July 1914 the hospital beds belonging to the Association have increased from 87 to 473, sanatorium beds from 148 to 446. In the same period 11,402 patients have been treated in hospitals, 6,373 in sanatoria, and over 50,000 patients have been examined at dispensaries and visiting stations.

To give the above figures meaning, the results must be compared with the work here recorded. Mr. D. W. Evans, the General Director, has drafted a table to show the value of treatment in sanatoria. In June 1919 there were at work 43.5 of the patients discharged from sanatoria in June 1913; 48.7 of those discharged in June 1914, 51.1 of those discharged in June 1915, and a similar percentage of those discharged in June 1916. The percentage now at work of those discharged six years ago is lower presumably, because of relapse or death which has occurred in the interval. But to find still at work half those discharged is encouraging. The immediate problem is to maintain 1,000 beds, in

spite of the fact that the cost has doubled. The president, Major David Davies, declares that the local authorities must increase their contributions if the number of beds is not to be reduced. The Association's work has been maintained by the levy of a rate for the first three years of ½d. in the £, and for the past two years of ¾d. in the £.

The Association's scheme to prevent tuberculosis includes, of course, a programme of research. Within the past two years the Medical School of Wales has included a chair of Preventive Medicine, and it is now suggested that a chair of tuberculosis should be established, and that its holder should become the Association's chief medical officer. Were this professorship established it is argued that the future general practitioners of Wales during their passage through the Medical School, would have at their disposal all the knowledge which the Association has gathered.

OLD PIPES.

MANY hospitals which received wounded soldiers will remember the useful supply of pipes which came through the organisation in connection with the officers and staff of the Metropolitan Railway Co., who collected and renovated many thousand old pipes for the use of the wounded. An interesting little booklet containing illustrations has been issued describing the subject by Mr. James Feiron, whose idea and initiative commenced the organisation.